



# ELSAH HISTORY

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## REV. MARY ELIZABETH HUGHES

*Based on information provided by Dean Hughes of Norris City, Illinois, great nephew of Mary Elizabeth Hughes*

On December 29, 1919, with a small inheritance from two uncles, the Reverend Mary Elizabeth Hughes purchased some land and a house in Elsie at 10 LaSalle Street (Lots 6 & 7 in Block 25) from the estate of Senator James Monroe Giberson. Her house was known as the Bible House and served as the headquarters of her extensive missionary work. For the next thirty-three years, until her passing on May 6, 1953, Elsie was home for this dedicated Christian worker.

In 1921 she bought the neighboring property at 12 LaSalle Street (Lots 8 & 9 in Block 25), which she called the Cottage and is now referred to as the Apocrypha House. This is where she lived while the Bible House underwent extensive renovation in the 1940s. In 1922 she purchased Lots 4 & 5 in Block 25, which now extended her front yard down to the Mississippi River.

Born on February 20, 1868 on a remote farm in the Fox River precinct of Phillips Township in White County, Illinois, Mary Elizabeth Hughes received her first degree, a Bachelor of Science, from Northern Indiana Normal School located at Valparaiso, Indiana, on August 11, 1898. She received a second degree, the Degree of Bachelor of Pedagogy, from Valparaiso College on August 9, 1900.

In 1904 she felt a call to start a magazine which she named *The Liberator*. In 1916 she reflected back on this call: "Then came the commission from the skies 'Cry aloud, spare not!' and in obedience to that command *The Liberator* was founded and sent forth on its two-fold mission: to befriend and help the unfortunate girl and to interest the public in her behalf. Special rescue numbers of the paper were given to the girls in slums of nearly every large city in the United States. *The Liberator* and I went everywhere on our errand of love for the Master. We made our way...—north, south, east and west — telling the deserted, friendless, heart broken girls of that compassionate and unfailing Friend, Christ Jesus, our Savior and King. Not only to the slums but often also to the hospitals, jails, and penitentiaries we went to tell the sick and imprisoned ones that Jesus saves and heals today the same as he did of old."



Mary Elizabeth Hughes as a young woman  
*Photo courtesy of Dean Hughes*

The smoothly beaten path | covet not, but | would take  
The rugged way. I'd lift from burdened hearts the weight of care.  
A sheltered nook, a fireside dream, is not the goal | seek,  
But rather o'er the burning plains would go, for there  
Are drooping lives who needs must know of the Perpetual Stream  
Whose Living Waters they may drink nor ever thirst again.  
I would not choose the cloistered cell, for on the broad highway  
Of sin are tried and tempted souls whom | might help to-day.  
No selfish life of ease for me! | love the toil, the strife.  
To live for others—this to me is life, abundant life.

M. E. HUGHES, editor and publisher of *The Liberator*

For many years she cherished a dream of establishing a self-supporting industrial colony for women and girls in the country. She called this project Shiloh Hills, and hoped to purchase the Eliestoun estate for this purpose, but it never came to fruition. She writes, "...on the table before me lie a number of letters from precious girls, girls who have come into my life through the misfortune that has left a cloud of shame and sorrow overshadowing them, out of which darkness they are anxiously peering to catch a ray of light and hope." Mary Elizabeth Hughes was truly a person of extraordinary faith and devotion.

A decorative border with a central rectangular frame and ornate corner and side pieces, enclosing the title and poem.

# The Liberator

Shall tongues be mute, when deeds are wrought  
Which well might shame extremest hell ?  
Shall freemen lock the indignant thought ?  
Shall Pitt's bosom cease to swell ?  
Shall honor bleed ? Shall truth succumb ?  
Shall pen and press and soul be dumb ?

—WHITTIER

## The Mill Creek Mystery

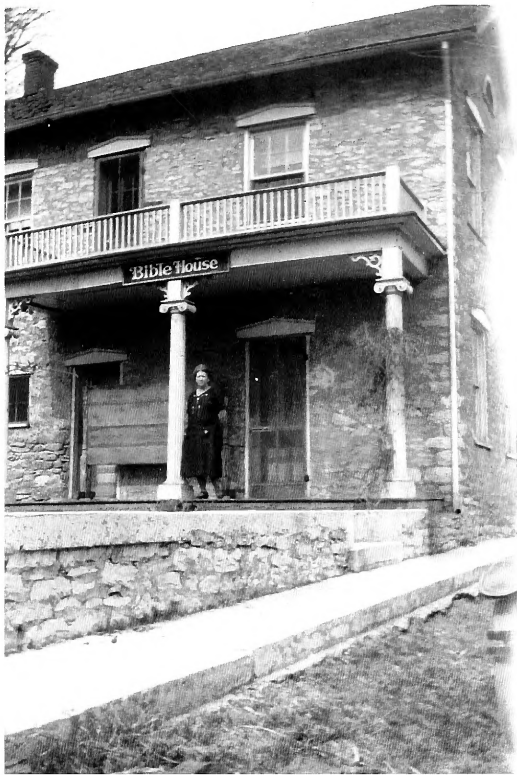
### America's Jungles

Who cares? Do you?  
To help these slaves in Satan's fetters bound—  
The fallen, ruined, lost ones all around,  
The human wrecks on deadly breakers tossed .  
By pointing them to Him who saves the lost?  
Who cares? Do you?

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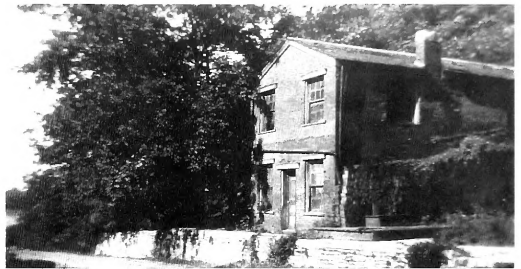
Cover from the December 1909 issue of  
The Liberator



*Mary Elizabeth Hughes on the porch of the Bible House sometime during the 1920s.*



*The Cottage, purchased by Mary Hughes in 1921, later called the Apocrypha House, now the home of Jim Green.*



*The brick house that once stood on the property Mary Hughes purchased in 1922 (lots 4 & 5 of Block 25) which extended her front yard down to the Mississippi River. Photos courtesy of Dean Hughes*



*Mary Elizabeth Hughes in front of the newly renovated Bible House about 1948*



*The Bible House in 2004. Home of Edith Hammond, mother of owner, Jane Pfeifer and Jane's husband, David. Photo: Marie Oleson*

## The Hughes Family returns to Elsah...

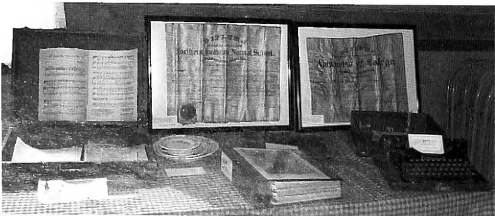
Last April, members of Mary Elizabeth Hughes' family gathered in Elsah to celebrate her life. Historic Elsah Foundation hosted a dinner for the family and for special guests. After dinner, Dean Hughes presented to HEF and the Village of Elsah items from the life of Rev. Mary Elizabeth Hughes. These are on display in the Village Museum together with a voluminous notebook prepared by Mr. Hughes containing detailed information on her life and her work.

Another gift, also to HEF and the Village, was three ledger books from the Keller Store, given by Edward Keller, former mayor of Elsah. These books, spanning the years from 1911 to 1937, give us valuable insights about the people, products, life-styles, and prices of those times. Within these ledgers are several pages showing Mary Hughes' account — paid in full.



August 1938, the family comes to Elsah to visit Aunt Mary. From left to right: Vera (Hughes) Doerner, Marion P. Hughes (holding son, Leon), Lillian M. (Bryant) Hughes, Marie (Doerner) Mills-Etnoyer, Madge (Hughes) Wilson, Mae Belle (Hamilton) Hughes, Mary Elizabeth Hughes, Claris B. Hughes, Gayle Wilson, Lloyd Hughes (looking out the bus window). Children in front row: Bernard Hughes, Harold Hughes, Ann (Hughes) Haerer. The bus is parked on LaSalle Street in front of what is now My Just Desserts.

Photo courtesy of Dean Hughes



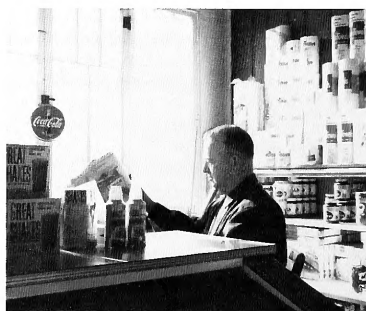
Items belonging to Rev. Hughes now on exhibit at the Village of Elsah Museum

Photo: Marie Oleson



Sixty-six years later, April 2004, the Hughes family returns to Elsah and sits for a family photo in Farley's Music Hall. Back row from left to right: Jared Baker, Rev. Harold Hughes, Janie Hughes, Bernard Hughes, Paul Hughes, Marilyn Hughes, Cindy Hughes, Kathleen Hughes, William Hughes, Bryan O'Neal. Seated left to right: Coradella (Hughes) Baker, Donald W. Hughes, Ann (Hughes) Haerer, Dean Hughes

Photo: Marie Oleson



Edward Keller in his store about 1960. Mr. Keller presented HEF and the Village with ledger books from the Keller Store, which his grandmother, Josephine, first opened for business in 1877. The store closed for the last time at 5:00 P.M. on June 30, 1970. The last two customers were the Crafton girls who came in to buy candy.

Photo: Inge Mack

Members of the Hughes family and Historic Elsie Foundation at last April's gathering in Farley's Music Hall, enjoyed visiting and dining on the good fare provided by My Just Desserts.



*Inge Mack, Genie Keller, Jerry Taetz, and Ed Keller*  
*Photo: Ned Bradley*



*Wayne Rowling, Rev. Harold Hughes, and Nancy McDow*  
*Photo: Ned Bradley*



*Mary Anne Schmidt serving the Hughes family*  
*Photo: Marie Oleson*



*Genie Keller and Paula Bradley visiting while Ann Badasch is helping with the coffee*  
*Photo: Marie Oleson*



*Cy Bunting, Jim Schmidt, and Helen Andrews*  
*Photo: Marie Oleson*



*Tim Tomlinson, and David and Jane Pfeifer.*  
*Photo: Marie Oleson*

## Village of Elsie Museum Events...

**Photo Contest:** The purchase prize of \$150 for the Village of Elsie's Fifth Annual Photography Exhibit was awarded to George Cooke for his color photograph entitled "Strolling Mill Street." Henry Hamlin, David Kreutz, and Susan Young received Special Recognition.

The judge, Janice Nesser-Chu, is a working photographer/artist and a professor of photography at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley in Missouri.

Other photographers included in this exhibit were Gretchen Batz, Florence Bommarito, Drew Foster, John Lyon, Inge Mack, Lois Mitchell, Matt Rector, James K. Schmidt, Mary Anne Schmidt, and Nancy Wiley.

The theme for this year's exhibit was *Elsie Magic*. Photographs were exhibited in the museum from July 16 through August 29.



*Purchase Prize winner: George Cooke's "Strolling Mill Street," with Elsie residents Jeff and Carla Luken walking their Dalmatian friend, Merlot*



*Special Recognition: David Kreutz' black and white photograph of "McDow's Store"—a much loved Elsie landmark that was destroyed by fire in 2003.*



*Special Recognition: Henry Hamlin's color photo entitled "Stars and Stripes Forever," records Fourth of July décor at the Maple Leaf Cottages*



*Special Recognition: Susan Young's black and white photograph of Emma Schaefer and her lemonade stand, entitled "With a Smile"*

**Story Day:** Long-time Elsie residents, Inge Mack, and her son, Eric Mack, shared stories of Elsie with museum visitors during Story Day on September 24. Al and Inge Mack and their two sons, Glenn and Eric, moved to Elsie in 1958.

**Bake Sale:** This year's annual bake sale will take place in the museum on Saturday, October 30. All proceeds will be used exclusively for the benefit of the museum.



## Village Happenings...

**Welcome home:** Friends and family gathered last spring to welcome home Sgt. Sean Meyer after his one-year-plus tour of duty in Iraq.



*Sean's family from left to right: Dave Collins, Robin Fulkerson, Mary Collins, Steve Fulkerson, Frances Fulkerson, Sarah and Sean Meyer, and Alan Fulkerson* Photo: Marie Oleson

**The Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois:** LPCI held its three-day annual conference last June at Pere Marquette State Park. On the last day of the conference Historic Elsah Foundation hosted a lunch in Farley's Music Hall prepared by My Just Desserts. Lunch was followed with a talk by John Williams, past president of HEF, and tours of the village and the Principia College Campus.



*John Williams telling Elsah's story to LPCI conference attendees in Farley's.*

*Photo: Marie Oleson*

**Hot dogs and fun times:** About 50 villagers and friends enjoyed a festive hot dog roast and pot luck dinner down by the river in August. Many thanks to Ann Badasch, Cindy Ira, and Bob Smith for organizing this happy event.

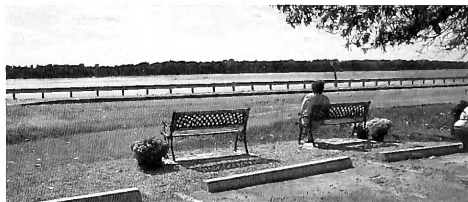
**Community folk dancing:** Villagers and friends have greatly enjoyed folk dancing, thanks to the Schreiber family.



*In this photo entitled "Emma's Reel" Emma Schaefer and Andrew Berner are paired for a round at one of Elsah's community folk dances in Farley's Music Hall.*

*Photo: Susan Young*

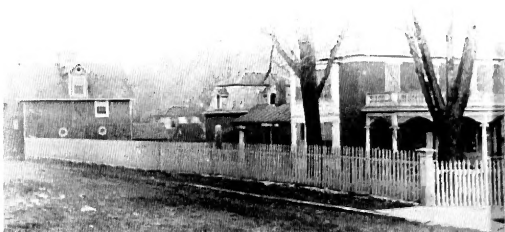
**Elsah's front entrance:** At the Village Board's request, Bob Smith spruced up the River Road entrance by removing rusty old guard rails and installing new benches. Potted mums add a nice touch of autumn color. Thanks Bob!



*Elsah's mayor, Marge Doerr, enjoys the view from the entrance to Elsah.*

*Photo: Marie Oleson*

**Correction:** On page four of our last newsletter (Spring 2004) the wrong picture was inserted in the right-hand column, second picture from the top. The correct picture, with accompanying text, is shown below.



*The Loehr house and barn in 1890 at Selma and LaSalle where the Maple Leaf Cottages were later built. The barn has been reproduced by Jerry Taetz between his house and Farley's Music Hall on Mill Street.*

## Upcoming Activities in the Village of Elsah...

### Second Saturday of each month

Pot luck and game night, \$1.00 per person  
6:00 p.m. Civic Center

### Saturday, December 4

Holiday Tree Lighting, 6:00 in Selma Square  
Holiday Pheasant Dinner by My Just Desserts,  
6:30 p.m. (reservations required) Farley's Music Hall

### Sunday, December 19

Annual Christmas Sing  
Methodist and Christian Science Churches  
Followed by refreshments, hosted by HEF  
2:00 p.m. Farley's Music Hall

### Winter and Spring 2005

HEF events are being planned and will be announced pending confirmation.

### ELSAH PLATES:

A few Elsah Commemorative plates are still for sale through Jeremiah's. They celebrate the sesquicentennial, 1953 to 2003, and portray the Union Hotel, Village Hall, Farley's Music Hall, and the Methodist Church.

\$25.00 plus \$7.50 shipping and handling  
Jeremiah's-Elsah  
P. O. Box 155  
Elsah, IL 62028

## Welcome...

- ...to Cyrus Bunting — 12 Palm Street (moving from 108 Mill Street)
- ...to Bonnie and Emilio Castroman — 59 Mill Street
- ...to Ute Schweitzer Levi — 10 LaSalle Street
- ...to Mickey and Dave Lindstrom — 101 Mill Street
- ...to Renee and Mathew McCreary and son, Theron — 2 Maple Street
- ...to Karen Rohne — 27 LaSalle Street
- ...to Ruth and Rip Sparks — 12 Mississippi (Riverview House)
- ...to Margaret and Bob Wilson — 108 Mill Street

## and Farewell...

- ...to Betty and Gil Ives — 59 Mill Street (now in Michigan and Florida)
- ...to Nancy and Bill Killion — 2 Maple Street (now in the Jerseyville area)
- ...to Carolyn and Bob Ruland — 101 Mill Street (now in Jerseyville)
- ...to Arnie Schmith — 2 Alma Street (finally in the D.C. area with Michele)
- ...to Will Monroe and Tyrone Rice — 12 Mississippi Street (Riverview House)

**New Life Members:** Thank you to **Cindy** and **Steve Ira** who have upgraded their membership to become Life Members of Historic Elsah Foundation.

**Welcome to new members of HEF:** **Conya** and **Timothy Cowan**, **Dottie** and **Ed Crews**, **Ellen** and **Stan Hanold**, **Marie** and **Cal Juriet**, and **Annie Reicken**.

### Historic Elsah Foundation Board:

President	Marie Oleson
Vice President	Inge Mack
Secretary	Kim Crocker
Treasurer	Jeanne Shultz
Board members:	
Ann Badasch	Mary Anne Schmidt
Paula Bradley	Carol Stookey
Marie Cresswell	Gerald Taetz
Jeralyn Lewitz	Tim Tomlinson

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### Memberships:

Regular \$10	Supporting \$50
Contributing \$15	Patron \$100
Sustaining \$25	Life \$500

Please send memberships or letters to the editor to:  
P.O. Box 117, Elsah, IL 62028  
Phone: 618-374-1059

The purposes of Historic Elsah Foundation are stated in the Articles of Incorporation (1971):

*"...the preservation and enhancement of the historic buildings, houses, architecture and culture of the Village of Elsah, Illinois, the historic areas, the publication of historical brochures, pamphlets, and periodicals regarding the Village, and the establishment of an educational program to inform the general public of the historical and educational value of the Village."*

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